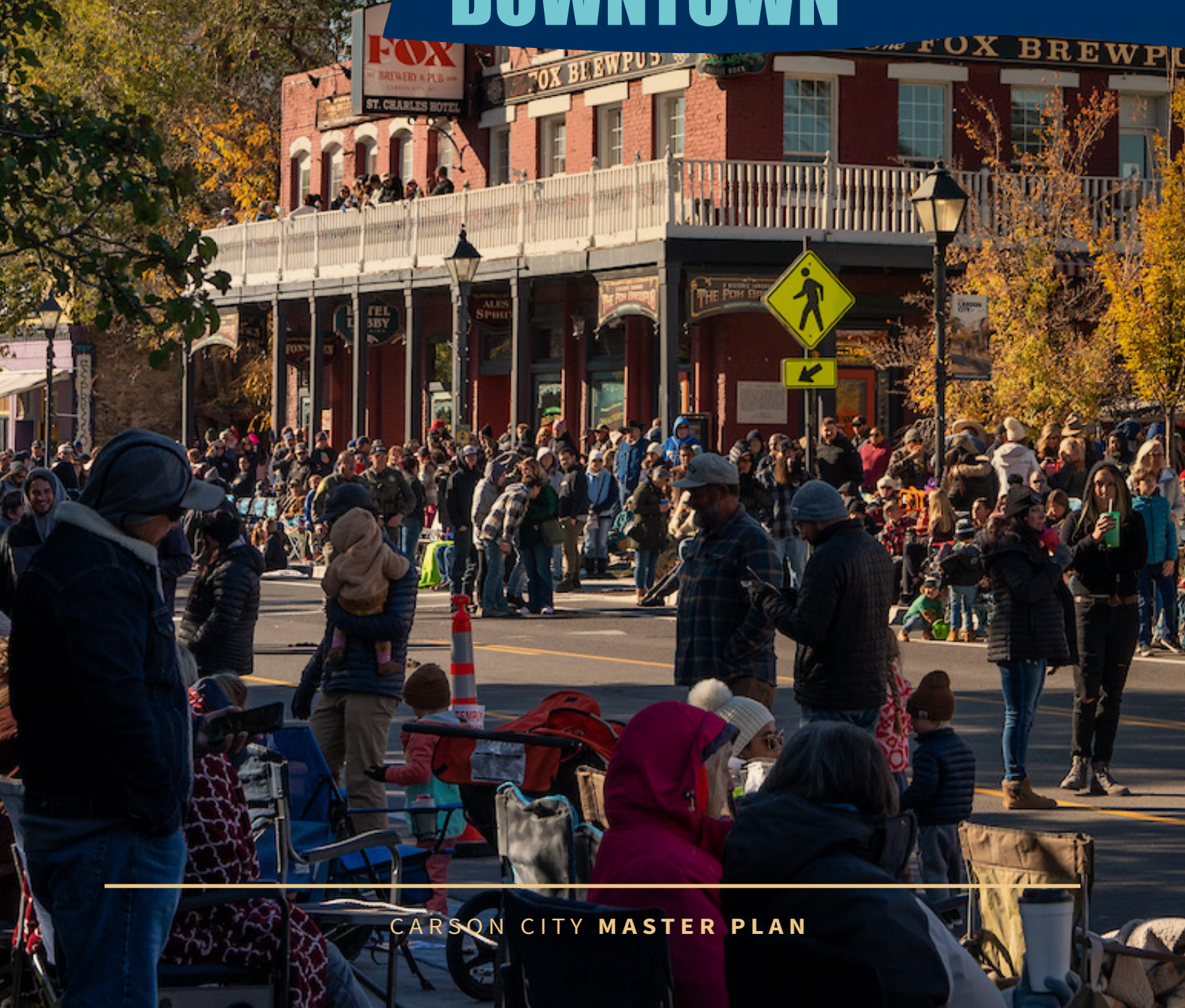


CHAPTER 6

VIBRANT GATEWAY CORRIDORS AND DOWNTOWN





WHERE WE ARE TODAY

Downtown Carson City is the heart and soul of the community. Its sense of place is defined by the lushly landscaped Capitol grounds, the many historic buildings that line Carson Street, the variety of local restaurants and shops, and its walkable and bikeable streetscape. Over the past ten years, Downtown has been transformed through public investment in pedestrian improvements, lighting, signage, landscaping, and infrastructure; however, private investment has lagged behind, creating pockets of underutilized and poorly maintained property in high-traffic areas of the community.

Along the City's major gateway corridors, aging strip commercial uses and longstanding vacancies present challenges to economic development, both visually and by hindering potential revitalization momentum. High profile sites remain a source of frustration among residents who are eager to see a change.

Community members of all ages shared that, while they appreciate Carson's small-town feel and retail/service offerings, they often travel to other destinations in the region to access services and amenities that are not available in Carson City. Young adults and families with children in particular noted that they would like to see more restaurants, entertainment options, and activities in Carson City, that appeal to their demographics.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The revitalization of Carson City’s gateway corridors through public and private investment will be a priority to help enhance the visual appeal of the community, promote economic development, and create new opportunities for people of all ages, incomes, and ability levels to live, work, and recreate. As part of these efforts, the City will continue to enhance the appearance, safety, and functionality of public rights of way, and promote adaptive reuse and reinvestment in properties, prioritizing the redevelopment of properties that have long sat underutilized. The City will also continue to prioritize the ongoing revitalization of Downtown Carson City as a major asset of the community by supporting efforts to attract private sector investment and collaborating with major property owners and the business community to establish a broader “footprint” for a series of destinations within Downtown to enhance its visibility and appeal.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal 6.1—Enhance the Safety, Functionality, and Appearance of Gateway Corridors

6.1a—Complete Streets

Continue to implement Complete Streets improvements along North Carson Street and East William Street with the goal of improving the entire length of each corridor and establishing a seamless connection to Downtown Carson City. Design intersections, crossings, access standards, traffic calming features, and roadway widths to improve accessibility and safety for bikes, pedestrians, and transit vehicles/riders. Incorporate landscaped medians, street trees, public art, wayfinding signage, lighting, and other features to enhance the appearance of the public realm and the comfort and safety of those who use it.



What are Complete Streets?

Carson City adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2014. Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access and comfortable accommodation for users of all ages and abilities, including, without limitation, pedestrians, bicycle riders, movers of commercial goods, persons with disabilities, vehicles for public transportation and their passengers, older adults, children and motorists. As an added benefit, Complete Streets support economic development and enhance the visual experience for users.

6.1b—Highway 50 Corridor (East)

Collaborate with the Nevada Department of Transportation, area businesses and property owners, and other stakeholders to develop and implement a coordinated vision and goals for the Highway 50 Corridor (East) that foster a coordinated approach to land use, access management, multi-modal transportation, signage, landscaping, and other considerations.

6.1c—Connectivity to Adjacent Neighborhoods and Employment Uses

Establish direct connections between gateway corridors and adjacent residential neighborhoods and employment uses, including as identified in the City's Unified Pathways Master Plan, to improve non-automobile access and allow for creative connectivity solutions.

6.1d—Business Signage

See also, policy 3.3f

Balance visibility considerations for businesses with the need to minimize sign “clutter” along gateway corridors in the design of signage plans for individual developments. Encourage the incorporation of historic signs (e.g., neon, painted murals) or other unique features into signage plans where feasible.

Goal 6.2—Facilitate the Revitalization of Vacant and Underutilized Properties

6.2a—Mix of Uses

Accommodate a mix of commercial, employment, residential, entertainment, and/or other supporting uses on vacant and underutilized properties along gateway corridors and in Downtown, in accordance with applicable land use policies in Chapter 10.

6.2b—Adaptive Reuse

See also, policies 5.2c, 6.2c, 7.4b, and 7.4c

Support the repurposing of vacant or functionally obsolete buildings where the original use intended for the building is no longer viable. Place a particular emphasis on the adaptive reuse of buildings that have been vacant for an extended period of time and/or are located in a highly visible location.

6.2c—Infill and Redevelopment

See also, policies 5.2c, 6.2b, 6.2b, 7.4b, and 7.4c

Encourage infill of vacant parcels and the redevelopment of underutilized properties when adaptive reuse is not feasible. Support opportunities to consolidate smaller lots where necessary to increase the viability of redevelopment. Collaborate with property owners, developers, and the community to define the desired mix of uses and other parameters for larger redevelopment sites.

6.2d—Incentives

Consider establishing regulatory incentives (e.g., density or height bonuses or reduced parking requirements) that complement other redevelopment tools. Increase awareness of financial incentives or other programs offered by outside agencies (e.g., historic tax credits, low-cost loans, grants) to help stimulate private investment.

6.2e—Infrastructure and Service Improvements

Proactively plan for infrastructure and service improvements necessary to support uses and densities planned for vacant and underutilized sites and buildings in Downtown and along primary gateway corridors. Facilitate discussions between developers and the City’s Public Works department to ensure existing water and sewer services can accommodate proposed projects, or establish a means for upgrading water and sewer services to meet project demands.

6.2f—Public-Private Partnerships

Seek opportunities for public-private partnerships on individual projects with the potential to play a major role in or serve as a future model for revitalization efforts.

6.2g—Branding

Explore opportunities to establish distinctive names or branding for different corridors (or segments of corridors), as well as for different character areas within Downtown, in collaboration with business and property owners, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Business Association.

See also, Goal 5.6

Goal 6.3—Promote the Ongoing Revitalization of Downtown

6.3a—Private Investment

Recognize the need to continue to promote private investment that complements the substantial public improvements made in the transformation of Carson Street and Curry Street through streetscape, landscaping, signage, and other Downtown improvements. Place a particular focus on the expansion of housing options in Downtown and opportunities to pursue the redevelopment or adaptive reuse of long-time vacant properties.





6.3b—Downtown Character Areas

The Downtown Mixed-Use land use category encompasses several distinct character areas or districts, as illustrated on the accompanying diagram on page 59. The area also includes portions of the Historic District. Future development and public/private investments in Downtown should reinforce the identity of and distinctions between these areas:

- **Main Street Mixed-Use (Carson Street).** This area is intended to reinforce the traditional “main street” character found along portions of Carson Street, as defined by a mix of historic storefronts and public buildings, a modest scale (generally two to three stories), on-street parking, and a bicycle and pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Opportunities exist for the rehabilitation of existing buildings through façade improvements and/or adaptive reuse, as well as for targeted redevelopment. Many buildings within this character area are listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places, or are eligible to be listed.
- **Urban Mixed-Use.** This area is characterized by high concentrations of vacant or underutilized parcels east of the Main Street Mixed-Use area, many of which are currently used for surface parking. Opportunities for larger, higher-density development exist, which may be suitable for uses that require a larger footprint, such as convention space, hotels, casinos, and multi-family residential. While a vertical mix of uses is encouraged to help activate primary street frontages and promote pedestrian activity, single-use buildings may be appropriate in some locations.
- **Neighborhood Transition.** This area is characterized by a mix of residential, office, small-scale retail, and other complementary uses. Buildings in the Neighborhood Transition Area have a smaller-scale and more residential character than is found in other areas of Downtown, particularly in areas west of Carson Street. Building heights generally do not exceed three stories, and some businesses are located in converted single-family residences. While infill and redevelopment opportunities exist, the adaptive reuse of the existing building stock in this area provides opportunities for smaller businesses that may benefit from a less prominent location (and potentially less expensive) option. Portions of the Neighborhood Transition area are located within the Historic District.



See also, Goal 8.1

- **Capitol Complex.** The Capitol Complex is a defining feature of Downtown Carson City. While it is not under the City’s jurisdiction, the Capitol Complex serves as a draw for visitors and residents and contributes to the character and vibrancy of Downtown. Plans for properties that abut the Capitol Complex should be coordinated with state facilities staff and planners, as appropriate.
- **State Office Complex.** The State Office Complex lies on the eastern edge of Downtown. While it is not within the City’s jurisdiction, the employee base that it houses contributes substantially to the vibrancy of Downtown and the health of Downtown businesses. Plans for properties that abut the State Office Complex should be coordinated with state facilities staff and planners, as appropriate.

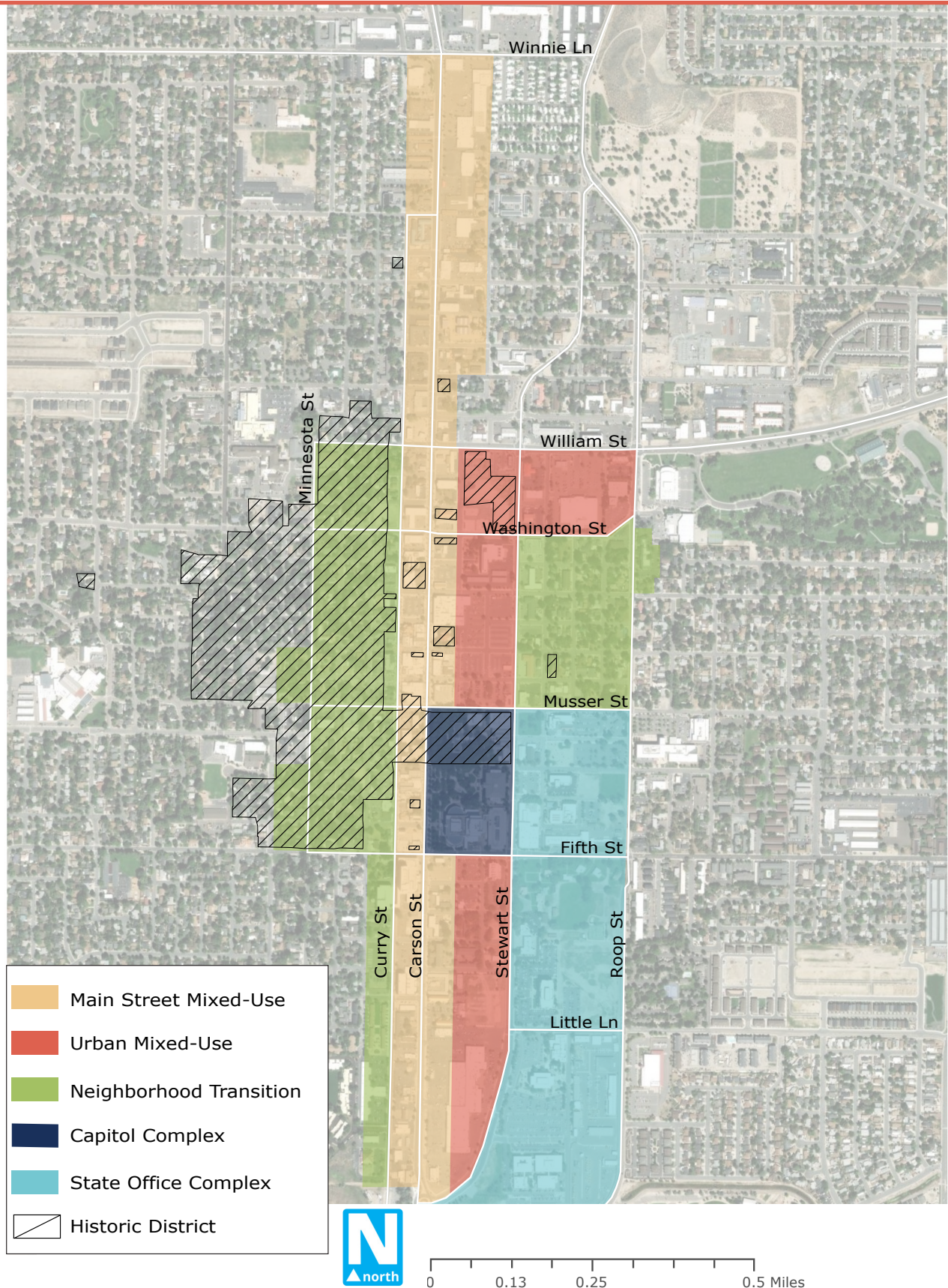
6.3c—Carson City Historic District

Continue to promote a balanced approach to economic development and historic preservation within Downtown, recognizing that these objectives are not mutually exclusive. Encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures regardless of whether or not they are listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places.

6.3d—Capitol Master Plan

Recognize the unique opportunity created by the state government cluster. Support ongoing efforts to reinvest in existing state buildings and construct new buildings and the long-term implementation of the Capitol Master Plan.

Downtown Character Areas Map



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